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THE CHRISTIAN WATCHMAN:

A

SERMON,

PREACHED IN

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, BOSTON,

JANUARY 11, 1860,

AT THE

Institution

OF

THE REV. WILLIAM R. NICHOLSON, D.D.

7541.112
a.

BY

ALEXANDER H. VINTON, D.D.
RECTOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY, PHILADELPHIA.

BOSTON:
JAMES B. DOW.
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INSTITUTION SERVICES.

The Rev. William R. Nicholson, D.D., was instituted Rector of St. Paul's Church, Boston, by the Rt. Rev. Manton Eastburn, D.D., Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts, on Wednesday, the 11th day of January, A.D., 1860.

Morning Prayer was read by the Rev. John S. Stone, D.D., Rector of St. Paul's Church, Brookline. The keys of the church were presented by William B. Reynolds, Esq., senior warden, in the name and in behalf of the parish to the new incumbent, who responded in the solemn words of the service:

"I, William R. Nicholson, receive these keys of the house of God at your hands, as the pledge of my institution and of your parochial recognition, and promise to be a faithful shepherd over you, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

After the instituted minister was received within the Chancel, the Bishop presented him with the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and of the Diocese of Massachusetts, in these words:

"Receive these books, and let them be the rule of thy conduct in dispensing the divine Word, in leading the devotions of the people, and in exercising the discipline of

the Church; and be thou in all things a pattern to the flock committed to thy care."

At the conclusion of the institution services the instituted minister, kneeling at the Communion Table, presented his supplications for himself in the following prayer:

"O LORD, my God, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof; yet thou hast honored thy servant with appointing him to stand in thy house, and to serve at thy holy altar. To thee and to thy service I devote myself, soul, body, and spirit, with all their powers and faculties. Fill my memory with the words of thy law, enlighten my understanding with the illumination of the Holy Ghost, and may all the wishes and desires of my will centre in what thou hast commanded. And, to make me instrumental in promoting the salvation of the people now committed to my charge, grant that I may faithfully administer thy holy sacraments, and, by my life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively Word. Be ever with me in the performance of all the duties of my ministry; in prayer, to quicken my devotion; in praises, to heighten my love and gratitude; and in preaching, to give a readiness of thought and expression suitable to the clearness and excellency of thy holy Word. Grant this for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son our Saviour."

The Sermon was preached by the Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, D.D., Rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia.

The Holy Communion was administered by the instituted rector, assisted by the Rev. John S. Stone, D.D., the Rev.

Charles Burroughs, D.D, and the Rev. E. M. P. Wells, D.D. A large number of the clergy and laity participated in this holy ordinance.

The services were of unusual interest; about fifty Clergymen were present on the occasion; thirty of whom were robed in their surplices and stood without the rails of the chancel with the new incumbent, until he was received within the rails by the Bishop.

It added much to the interest of the occasion, that two of the former rectors of this Church were present and took part in the services, — the Rev. John S. Stone, D.D., Rector of St. Paul's Church, Brookline, having been rector of this church for ten years; and the Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, D.D., Rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia, who filled the rectorship for seventeen years, and was the immediate predecessor of Dr. Nicholson.

The church was crowded to its utmost capacity with an attentive and appreciative congregation, and it was an occasion which will long be remembered by the Episcopalians of Boston and this diocese.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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18 Louisburg Square, Jan. 11, 1860.

My Dear Doctor Vinton:

I very much wish to see in print the sermon you preached this morning on the occasion of my "institution" into the Parish of St. Paul's. The beautiful simplicity of its conceptions, the exceeding clearness of its arrangement, the justness and importance of the views presented, and the eloquence investing it all, were alone sufficient to prompt my most earnest request. But I am especially prompted by the memories of the occasion itself. So many and marked are the associations of to-day, I cannot but wish for that sermon as a sort of visible monument of them all. Whether my future here shall bring weal or wo, this must needs be for me an ever memorable day; and if, as I sincerely pray, God's blessing shall attend my ministry among your old people, your printed sermon, so full of the true pastoral spirit and power, would be to me a recurrent source of gratification. And I am sure I might ask its publication in the name of the whole parish; amongst whom I have already experienced so many kindnesses, and to whom your sermon paid a tribute of such fondness and love.

Affectionately your brother in Christ,

Wm. R. Nicholson.

At a meeting of the Wardens and Vestry of St. Paul's Church, Boston, it was unanimously

"*Resolved*, That the thanks of the Wardens and Vestry of St. Paul's Church, be presented to the Rev. Alexander H.

Vinton, D. D., for his able, eloquent and timely sermon, preached at the Institution of the Rev. William R. Nicholson, D.D., as Rector of said Church, and that a copy of the sermon be requested for publication."

Rev. and Dear Sir:

The undersigned, having been appointed a Committee in accordance with the above resolution, respectfully request a copy of your sermon for publication.

William B. Reynolds,
William Appleton,
James B. Dow.

The Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, D. D.,
Rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Phiadelphia.

The undersigned Clergy, in attendance at the Institution of the Rev. Dr. Nicholson, being together after the services of the occasion, were, by the Rt. Rev. the Bishop, called to order.

Rev. Dr. Edson, of Lowell, said:

Rt. Rev. Chairman,—Having listened with great delight to the sermon preached this morning by the Rev. Dr. Vinton, and with the view to give formal expression to the strong feeling of approbation so unanimous around me, I beg leave to offer the following resolution:

Resolved, That the thanks of the Clergy present be offered to the Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, D.D., for the excellent sermon delivered by him on this very interesting occasion, and that a copy thereof be requested for publication.

The Resolution, seconded by the Rev. A. L. Baury, was unanimously carried.

Whereupon, the Chair appointed the Rev. Messrs. Edson and Baury to communicate the Resolution to the Rev. preacher.

The Rev.	Theodore Edson, D.D.	The Rev.	Henry Burroughs, Jr.
"	John S. Stone, D.D.	"	James A. Bolles, D.D.
"	Alfred L. Baury.	"	Samuel J. Evans.
"	E. M. P. Wells, D. D.	"	George S. Converse.
"	George M. Randall, D.D.	"	John T. Burrill.
"	Charles Mason, D.D.	"	B. F. De Costa.
"	Joseph H. Clinch.	"	Justin Field.
"	Samuel B. Babcock.	"	Nathaniel G. Allen.
"	Nicholas Hoppin, D.D.	"	William H. Munroe.
"	John P. Robinson.	"	Francis A. Foxcroft.
"	George Leeds.	"	William Bartlet.
"	Thomas R. Lambert.	"	Edmund F. Slafter.
"	Samuel Cutler.	"	Charles Burroughs, D.D.
"	Thomas F. Fales.	"	John L. Watson, D.D.
"	Moses P. Stickney.	"	John West.
"	Edward L. Drown.	"	Thomas R. Pynchon.
"	Moses B. Chase.	"	William G. Hawkins.
"	George D. Wildes.	"	William Withington.
"	J. S. Copley Greene.	"	William Watson.
"	Cyrus F. Knight.	"	Elisha F. Watson.

Philadelphia, Jan. 31, 1860.

Rev. and Dear Brother:

I acknowledge with very great pleasure the kind requests of yourself, of the Wardens and Vestry of St. Paul's Church, and of the associated Clergy, to print the sermon preached at the Institution.

I forward the copy herewith,

And am very truly and fraternally yours,

Alexander H. Vinton.

Rev. William R. Nicholson, D.D.,
Rector of St. Paul's Church, Boston.

SERMON.

EZEKIEL, xxxiii. 7.

"SON OF MAN, I HAVE SET THEE A WATCHMAN UNTO THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL."

FAR away from Jerusalem; away from Israel's home; on the banks of the Assyrian river, — the inspiration of God sought out the Prophet and gave him this commission: "I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel." How thoroughly he discharged his office this whole book is a witness. He foretold the calamities that were to befall his nation, — the sacking of Jerusalem, the destruction of its walls, the abduction of its monarch, and the captivity and exile of its people. And then he pictures the mischiefs that should spring among themselves, provoking these retributive sorrows — Egyptian, Phœnician and Persian idolatries, all mingling with Jewish worship, and turning it to corruption and sin. He vindicates the character

and administration of God, in reply to the scepticism of their backslidden hearts, and then he holds forth conditions of mercy more absolute than those of any preacher before Him who came to preach "deliverance to the captive and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound." This various ministry of his, with its many-tongued preaching, of warning, alarm, instruction, and assurance; with its clear scrutiny and its inflexible discipline, as well as its more attractive qualities, — sometimes gentle if not quite tender, — the whole of these functions are denoted at once by his simple title, "Watchman." He was Watchman to Israel.

And what the Prophet was to the elder church, such is the Presbyter to the modern Israel. The minister of Christ is charged with the same responsibilities. The proportions of the office may be changed, but not its nature. Since the bloodshedding of the great atonement, the minister of God may proclaim a louder and larger mercy than any former prophet would have dared to do — for so his commission runs. But in every other particular the office and its relations are the same. He is a watchman to the chosen people of God, and is allied to them by a dearer connexion than even the thick and tenacious blood of Jewish pedigree. From the title thus assigned to him — "Watchman" — let us learn what his duties and connexions are.

"Watchman!" The word suggests a picture of a beleaguered citadel. And then the watchman is a sentinel, looking for an enemy from abroad. Belted in his full armor he treads his lonely march forward and back in unsleepy vigilance. His eye pierces the thick covert of night—his strained ear is sensitive to the stealthiest tread—his tongue trembles all the while on the verge of a cry, demanding the countersign, and his whole energy is alert and poised to give stout resistance and loud alarm. And thus the watchman of Israel is a combatant, battling the foes of Christ and truth.

Again: the title suggests another picture. The watchman may be a police guard. There is no enemy from abroad; but he protects the peaceful city in its silence and slumber. He treads the midnight streets, strong, patient, quick; directs a stray passenger; arrests a suspicious prowler; seizes the burglar or assassin; snuffs the first scent of fire, and shouts the alarm, or the "All's well,"—and so till the day relieves his labors. The safety of the city is with him, as he is faithful or not. The municipal authority is peremptorily his. He may give false alarms, and make false arrests from which the sufferer may appeal. He may himself be impeached for unfaithfulness or crime; but for good or ill, the watchman wields the supreme discipline of the city within his beat, and while the night lasts.

But the title, "watchman," brings another scene to mind, which imparts to it a very different sort of interest. Think of a sick chamber, where a languisher lies parched and moaning, and where the watcher sits or moves about in untiring attention: now smoothing the pillow; presently fanning the hot flesh; now administering the medicine, and then measuring the food; composing the restless sufferer to quiet, or rousing him if he sleeps too heavily; anticipating his wants and inventing a hundred devices for assuaging his discomfort. He is friend and physician in one, whose kindness and skill lay the foundation for grateful attachment as long as that watched life lasts. The minister then is the affectionate watcher for souls.

From these various aspects of the minister's office let us now take our several topics of thought.

I. In the first place, and under the first view of the watchman's duty, he is an armed sentinel, to hold guard against foes from abroad. The Christian minister must, likewise, not only be quick to challenge any invasion of the faith of Christ, but be ready, if need be, to hold tough controversy with the assailant. It is indeed the least amiable light in which he can be presented; for theological controversy is grown to be a proverb of every thing that is hateful in temper and language. It is not altogether

strange that it should be so. When men differ radically on matters which they deem vital, no wonder if the difference borrows an emphasis from eternity itself. No wonder if the cool blood grows hot, and saintly affection degenerates into passion, and the dispute runs on to a quarrel, when that on which a man has made the deliberate venture of his soul for time and eternity is assailed, denied and ridiculed. I do not excuse it, but only explain it. The fact of this theological bitterness is as old as theology. It exposes the clinging infirmities of human nature, and shows how unworthily a man may do a worthy thing. For it is both worthy and necessary. If God has deemed it worthy of himself to make a revelation to his creatures, it can never be less than worthy to inquire what he has revealed. And if there be a body of Christian faith which is neither Pagan nor Mahommedan nor Mormon, and yet is divinely true,—the grand central truth of the world, by which God would save the world,—then the truth as it is in Jesus becomes the very citadel of the soul's life. Destroy it and the Church's treasure and hope are destroyed. To defend it, the Church should rally her best forces, and the saintly ambition of her watchman can aspire to no prowess so high as that stout contest for the faith whose crown is martyrdom. Notwithstanding the vicious elements of religious controversy, there can be no

doubt that it has proved itself historically to be serviceable to the truth. It begets discrimination of thought; it defines sharply the lines of truth, where its borders might else mingle vaguely with the shadows of error, and the truant mind might wander into confusion and disaster. Very weighty issues sometimes depend on very slender distinctions. A long and angry controversy was waged in the early church upon the insertion or omission of a single vowel in reference to two words which in all other respects were spelt alike. The dispute has been often called trifling. Yet the subject of that dispute was nothing less than the nature and dignity of the Son of God. And the majesty of this mighty theme was condensed into that discussion of a single letter of the alphabet. Such conflicts of faith are oftentimes as wholesome as they are almost always inevitable. When floating masses of opinion meet and rush together in mid air, the collision will be electrical. The crash and the flash may seem to tear the firmament, and to a timid mind give sign of a returning chaos. But when the conflict is over the elements of the faith are adjusted in safer proportion, and the whole atmosphere of the Church's thought and life is wholesome and clear.

Now if controversy be sometimes necessary within the church, how much more without. Each generation begets a new corps of enemies of the faith of

Christ. I need not recount the successive victories of the Church against her many-headed foe, Paganism. Her conflict was long and fierce, and her banners trailed through the blood of her own slain, but they floated free at last, wafted on the very breath of the jubilate of the saints. The ancient Paganism, civilized and barbarous, Grecian and Gothic, retreated, and was demoralized before the progress of the church. And modern heathenism always dies out when the Gospel enters in, as the ghastly visions of night are dispelled by the sun rising.

But Paganism is born of the natural heart, and reproduces itself in new varieties as the ages change. Now as ever the church has her outward foes, against which her watchman stands sentinel. They are subtler, keener, more intellectual, than ever. They often indeed unbury the arguments which have been many a time refuted, but they melt down the old metal and recast the round shot into conical, to rebound less and pierce the deeper. And what is worse, the enemy has changed his flag. Almost all the forms of opposition to the Christian faith profess a loud respect for Christianity, but it is Christianity as they would have it, and as their reasonings make it.

The principal forms of opposition to Christianity in our day are both scientific and philosophical. The old practical objections — of the mystery of

some of its doctrines, and faults of its disciples, are only the random shots of individual cavillers, and will never become the foundation of a system of antagonism. But the scientific and philosophical objectors are a phalanx. Their plan of warfare is an intellectual theory, and their objections a whole battery. And it is remarkable that, from whatever quarter the assault proceeds, it is directed with a sort of instinctive sagacity against the great truth which is the very citadel of the faith, viz.: the inspiration of the Bible.

The two great systems into which all the metaphysical philosophies of the world may be resolved, — the material and the spiritual, — the philosophy which begins with the conceptions of the mind as its first principles, and works outward into the material world; and that other philosophy which begins with the outward, and traces its way backward to its first principles in the mind, — both these repugnant systems agree in this: that they assume a philosophy demonstrable by the human intellect to be the basis of universal truth. Whatever fails to quadrate with it, is necessarily false. And from their several points of attack they aim their conclusions at the same object. The one school affirms that God is sufficiently known by the instinctive spiritual consciousness of each man, and as the Bible contradicts this consciousness it must of necessity be untrue.

The other philosophy maintains, as its ripest conclusion, that God cannot be ascertained by any method of human intelligence, and therefore the Bible is not a revelation of Him. These are the most formidable foes of the faith, for they would project their bombs into the very magazine of Christianity to explode the whole fabric at once. The opposition of physical science to Christianity is more various and less penetrating. It aims rather at the bastions than the citadel,—attempts to show the weakness of certain parts of the Bible, and so insinuates the fallacy of the whole. The science of Astronomy began the assault long ages ago, and by means of the Hindoo tables-men once undertook to disprove the recent origin of man, as it is taught in the Old Testament. But when a more improved science demonstrated the spuriousness of the Hindoo calculations, not only was the Bible found to be intact, but the very failure of the assault vindicated the truthfulness of Scripture; and astronomy has never since, I believe, levelled any one of its demonstrations against the faith of inspiration. But in our own time has arisen Geology, the most popular of the sciences. With no abstractions — no mathematics — it simply calls attention to the structure of the material world, asks credence only to the veracity of its statements, and then by suggesting a few plausibilities leaves the inquirer's mind in the attitude of asking this fatal question:

"If these facts are so, how can the Bible be true?" Then comes another opposer of Revelation, in the shape of Animal Chemistry and Physiology, showing how every living thing is evolved necessarily from a universal germ, showing from the vestiges of creation how it can solve the problem of creation more satisfactorily by its own rationale than by the Book of Genesis, and enunciating its formula thus: "given an ovum and electricity — the result is the universe." Resolving all forces and forms into these elementary ones, it makes creation so necessary and simple that a creator, if not altogether a supernumerary, in the world, need not at least be a pervading, omniscient intelligence, nor a personal being at all; and so again Science discredits the Bible.

Next come in sight the flaunting banners of Natural History, with a corps of followers; each one profoundly convinced that because different varieties of lions and monkeys seem to have been created in different and distant localities, therefore men certainly were. Hence, the unity of the human race is a feeble fallacy, and the Bible, which asserts one human blood, is a mistake. The revelation of a Saviour, a regenerating Spirit, a resurrection and immortality, is only a book of spiritual peerage for the pedigree of one, out of the many Adams, of the human race.

And the last of that hostile army that I shall pass in review, is the science of Mathematics — showing how, by the necessary evolutions of numbers, fixed laws, at certain periods, turn upon themselves and produce such abnormal results, as seem to contradict themselves and take on the air of miracles. Miracles therefore are only natural results, happening at opportune periods, and are no proof of a present Deity or a fresh revelation. When the miracles are thus eliminated from the Bible, they leave behind no element of the supernatural; and the authority of Scripture, with its corner-stone wrenched out of place, is left to rest on the loose ideas of propriety and fitness which each man forms for himself, and which constitute what is called its internal evidence. Such, and so various, are the enemies against which the Christian watchman stands sentry. I do not say he must be prepared to fight them all. It were a bootless effort for one man, in one lifetime, to refute the several forms of infidelity. It is enough for a Christian minister to study them, to understand their worth or worthlessness, and so to be able to alarm or to quiet the anxiety of the Church. And he cannot study far, without discovering several facts, which may serve to reassure his courage and confirm the faith of the Church. The first fact is, that every form of reasoning against the Bible assumes some postulate, which may reasonably be

refused, and when refused, lets go the whole chain of argument that depended on it. The other fact is, that all these hostile bands, shooting forth their missiles of the brain from so many different standpoints, pierce each other, and inflict a mutual slaughter. The schools are so fatally antagonistic that they not only cannot all be true, but neither one of them can have the truth exclusively. When then the wrangling philosophies shall have adjusted a treaty of compromise, and consented to a universal system; when the men of science shall equally agree in the meaning of the facts of nature, and in their inferences from those facts, then the Christian minister may begin to be anxious for the integrity of the sacred faith of which he keeps watch and ward. But until then, his sufficient strength is in their weakness; until then, he need not even hold his musket at a poise. For the Christian faith can never be logically impaired by theories of unbelief, each one of which invalidates all the rest, and which reduce the mind to that state of mere broad scepticism, in which all faith is eclipsed, and reason gropes or sleeps in total dark uncertainty. This I apprehend to be the rational conclusion of all science, physical or metaphysical, when it runs outside of its proprieties, and attempts theology.

As the Christian looks out upon the disastrous fog of scientific speculation, he may well turn with a shuddering delight to clasp to his heart anew the precious volume of trusted inspiration. And if that cherished Book sometimes contains statements which are above the reason of man, they are by that fact just so much removed above the refutation of his reason. At the same time, when it does let down some of the pendant revelations of the upper world within our reach, those revelations are found to link themselves in so naturally with truths already certified, as to establish a sure chain of analogy between the known and the unknown, and demonstrate the supernatural by the natural. When the Christian minister thinks of this, and remembers how often the science which assailed the Bible has been afterwards rebuked by its own discoveries, he may wrap himself in his mantle of content, and judge that his best wisdom, as a watchman, is a calm and observant inactivity; ready to give the summons, if need be, to the trained champions of the faith, but leaving the speculations of men to work their own defeat. While he admonishes the Church to stand fast in the Lord, he may commend to them the Bible, not as resting on the loose assent of Geology, Chemistry or Metaphysics, but as self-attesting; vindicating its claims by its felt power; verifying its inspiration by the conscious illumina-

tion of the Holy Ghost; proving its divinity by converting and sanctifying our sinful humanity. Let the House of Israel be thus true to itself and its Lord, and then, though "the enemy come in like a flood," the watchman, blowing the trumpet of warning, may shout aloud, "The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge;" and all the people shall say "Amen!"

II. I pass, now, to the second branch of our subject, in which the minister is represented as a watchman *within the walls.* To him is committed, for the time, the whole police of the city. He is *Rector* of the House of Israel; an office that includes many and various qualifications. No doubt, for example, the Christian minister is invested with a parochial authority, to secure order and discipline. He guides the worship of the Church. He holds the keys of admission to her membership. He has the power to restrain or exclude from the use of that membership. Every person that would frequent her holy ways is liable to be interrogated by him. He is to reconcile differences, and to promote kindness and good will. He is to guide the inquirer, admonish the offender, check the wayward, arrest the incendiary, summon the people to action, and if need be, enlist the whole force of the Church. He is to alarm, or to comfort, or to counsel, whenever the earnest members of

the Church ask: "Watchman, what of the night?" It is easy to recite this catalogue of duties, and to draw the programme of a minister's parochial work. But what anxiety springs from the possession of such responsibilities; what an immense variety of difficulties there are in discharging them. It was such anxiety that led St. Paul to exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?" and it was such difficulties that led him to ask the prayers of his brethren, that he might be delivered "from unreasonable and wicked men." "Unreasonable and wicked men!" For although a minister's difficulties spring from within, as well as from without, yet if he carries a wise and wholesome anxiety, such as leads him to cast himself on his Saviour's strength, his remaining difficulties will come from other men, "wicked or unreasonable." They will not take his well meant counsels kindly. They will resist his reproofs; retort his rebukes; spurn his exhortations. The administration of discipline will, in our day especially, be apt to provoke a sort of corporate indignation among the laity; for the lay element was never so strong in our church, and the laity never so much a power, as now. The Church owes as much to them, as a city to the citizens. Without them, and with only a priesthood, the church would be a city with only walls and watchmen. It is for them that the Church *is*,—the watch-

man for them, not they for the watchman. What more natural, therefore, than that they should fall into the habit of regarding the minister as belonging to them, because for them — theirs, not Christ's. Then comes the claim of subserviency; the revolt at discipline; interference with the regulations of public worship, and the captious criticism of the minister's teachings or manner, — just as if the irresponsible citizens should reproach the watchman for choosing one sidewalk, instead of the other, or criticize the tone with which he cried "fire," under the windows of their blazing dwellings.

And then, among the unreasonable men, who sometimes hinder a minister's work, are those of his own calling: watchmen, like himself, in the same city, whose walk and beat lie next to his. They not only watch the church, but him; lest, in his turnings and returnings, his foot should chance to tread an inch beyond the line appointed, or his protruding elbow jostle their prerogative. If the theological hatred, mentioned in the adage, be hateful; the clerical envy, to which the church is no stranger, is no less troublesome, because it is simply contemptible. The unreasonable men are sometimes more troublesome than those wicked men, the convicted impenitent, whom the watching minister arrests, to bring them to his master, Christ; who are angry at his earnestness, and maddened the more

by his persistent strength, sometimes to rebuke and blasphemy. He has to deal with such in his daily round of duty and work; taxing his vigilance and energy and patience to the utmost. He needs then something more than his badge of office, more than simple church authority, more force than is lodged in his pastoral staff. He needs the spiritual stature of a full grown man in Christ Jesus; — needs the stalwart vigor of a soul nerved by the Holy Ghost. Now, when these responsibilities and labors are all to be met and accomplished by one man, with only one mind, one pair of eyes, of hands, of feet, working and watching, instant in season and out of season, — is it strange, if the watchman should himself, be sometimes found sleeping at his post, or indolent, or laggard, or beguiled by the mad music of some festive hall, as it breaks upon him in the recurring steps of his night-long march? It may not be strange, but it is most undutiful and sinful, and his soul must answer it at the morning muster of the great day. For if he see the danger, and give no warning, nor strive to the utmost of his borrowed divine strength, then the souls committed to him, may be cut off in their sins; but their blood will be required at the watchman's hand.

III. Let us now turn to the third aspect of a minister's duty, as represented by the office of a watcher in a sick chamber.

Now the picture takes on mellower hues, — soft, yet high lights, and tender, even if deep, shadows. For this is the pastoral office with all its technicalities stripped off; the office where the heart is guide, and teacher, and comforter, and lord. This is the domestic aspect of the ministerial calling, where the man, not the functionary, is wanted, and where he whom Christ has sent, best proves his Divine authority by showing his manhood divinely. It is a work for every human sensibility to be developed to the purest degree; a work in which the love for God, and the love for man, coalesce into one grand, divine motive and fill the heart.

The soul, over which the minister watches, is sick with its guilt, its sin, its loneliness, its weariness, its dejection, its passion-fever, or its world delirium; and the pastor must be tender and firm, gentle and strong, loving and wise, all at once. Every variety of human sorrow, whether stirred by divine grace, or without grace, comes under his cognizance and care. He is the receptacle of secrets, sacred as the soul; the sharer of griefs, dark with the shadow of death; the guide and director from errors that once, perhaps, bewildered his own soul to a downfall. He must learn to know other hearts, from knowing the workings in and out of his own; must be able to discern the gentle and the agonizing influences of the Holy Ghost; his assuagements and his pangs,

from a felt experience; must aim to inspire the love and trust of Christ, by breathing it from his own fervent bosom; — must teach others the way to Christ, by being himself in Christ; — and impart the confidence and the hope of the Gospel, by *knowing* "Whom he has believed." Else he were but a blind leader of the blind; as a watcher, inexpert and inefficient; his labor a long drawn weariness, glad of every respite or escape, even at the cost of a soul. All other work of the Christian minister may have its almost excusable tedium; may seem more like mere acting and labor, because the fruit does not appear at once. But this cure of souls, this pastoral ministry to individuals, this introducing Christ to the personal heart, verifies the prophecy concerning Christ himself: "his reward is with him and his work before him." It is its incentive and satisfaction too. It begins already to weave the wreath of victory for the faithful unto death. It begins already to gather the jewels, that are to adorn his crown of rejoicing. It begins thus early to group the stars, among which he shall shine, who has "turned many to righteousness." It is the heaven begun of the minister, who shall stand up at last and say: "Lord, behold I and the children whom thou hast given me!" It is a work, O how to be coveted by those whom Christ has called to it; how to be cherished by those

whose work it is. The love of souls, — the Divine passion of our sanctified humanity, the outworking of the indwelling Christ, the supreme impulse and inspiration of the Holy Ghost, affiliating us to God, making the minister and his work both Christ-like.

These varied relations of a minister to his people, which our text has thus suggested, very naturally come to mind on an occasion when, as now, those relations are to be officially inaugurated.

I do not present these views to you, my Reverend brother, as suggesting any thing that your own mind has not, many a time, pondered. Your well-tried ministry, in other places, attests sufficiently the vigorous grasp with which such views of duty have possessed your mind and heart; but I would use them as a reminder of the circumstances under which you will here be called to exercise the various functions of a watchman. Here, in a city which is the central circle of mental activity of all the continent, where the general intellect continually seethes and simmers with a true Athenian instinct; where free thought begets bold opinions, — you will be often enough challenged to mark with your eye, the various speculations that may prove hostile to the faith; may be driven to assert, afresh and often, "the faith once delivered to the saints," and to be a wakeful watchman. I have no doubt of your manful prowess in this respect.

So likewise in the interior duties of your office, the parochial, I speak experimentally when I say, your field is so promising and pleasant that few can rival, and none surpass it. In a congregation, whose tastes and training are invincibly for the law and order of the Gospel, — who are peaceful from principle, as well as preference, your round of duty may be as pleasant as a watchman's summer evening walk. There are no incendiaries, nor brawlers, — no riot or misrule, in this part of God's city. May you find the oversight of it to be as happy as others have found it!

And again, in that endearing intimacy which comes from a pastor's personal counsel and communion, there can be none that could make more rich returns of affection. If the New England heart is not always carried in the hand, yet it is a deep and true heart nevertheless, giving back from its deep well-springs, in a living flow, all the sympathy and tenderness that can be showered upon it. The only word of advice and exhortation that I would presume to offer touching your relations to this people is, "Love them, dear Brother, as they deserve to be loved." And may the unction of the Holy One be ever fresh upon your soul; — "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength," "making you perfect in every good work, to do the will of the God of peace."

In turning again to you, my Christian friends, to commend this subject to your use and practice, I need not, if I could, describe the feelings with which I stand before you, just here and just now. I seem to myself not to have taken leave of you before. For although other ministries, for both you and me, have come upon us, with new influences and impressions, yet not until now has the old connection been formally superseded. But this occason, which solemly ratifies the new connection, seems solemly to terminate the old.

In standing before you, side by side with him, whom you have chosen to be over you in the Lord, I seem to myself to be introducing my successor to you, and you will not expect that I can do so without a parting word of exhortation. I may invoke for him the same kindness and consideration which you constantly extended to me. He can ask no more than this. As he applies his energy and experience to the administration of this parish, will you not, with glad mind and will, second and further his endeavors as you can. Will you not inspirit him by sympathizing in his cares and anxieties for you, be ready to follow where he leads, and respond with hand and heart, when the watchman calls. And above all things, remember that "except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Let each household pray its prayers for him

daily. Let each praying person plead with the great Head of the ministry and the Church, to grant him a double portion of his spirit. Let that little band of praying ones, who, for so many years, have met weekly in the parlor or the upper chamber, whose constancy was often the most living proof of the church's piety, be mindful as ever of their pastor. Let him be made to feel, as I often was by some holy influence diffused over me, when I least expected it, that friends were praying for me, and the Holy Ghost, in his approaches to my spirit, was answering their prayer. Let that answer of unction descend upon him daily, with the assurance that it is from the power of your prayers, and how his heart will be knit to yours, his zeal be increased, his strength be refreshed, and his love for your souls be without any bounds.

Dear brethren, it rests with you, not only to make his life among you pleasant, and his labor such as he can bear, but above all, to give to his life and labor such demonstration of the spirit and of power, as to prove that he has come among you for your immortal blessing. Out of my heart full of affection comes this prayerful wish, for you and for him.